

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-11

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE

INFO USMISSION GENEVA

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 005590

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UNDP, OCON, CU

SUBJECT: CUBAN INVITATION TO HOST THE UNDP GOVERNING
COUNCIL MEETING IN JUNE 1976

1. SUMMARY - ASSISTANT SECRETARY LEWIS HAS INFORMED
NETHERLANDS ECONOMIC MINISTER JOHAN HUIBREGTSE THAT THE
US MAY NOT BE ABLE TO ATTEND THE JUNE MEETING OF THE UNDP
GOVERNING COUNCIL IF IT IS HELD IN HAVANA AND THAT IT WOULD
SUPPORT ANY MOVE TO HOLD THE MEETING IN GENEVA OR NEW YORK.
HE INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT THE US IS NOT LEADING ANY
CAMPAIGN FOR THIS PURPOSE. END SUMMARY.

2. HUIBREGTSE CALLED ON LEWIS JANUARY 7 TO SAY THAT THE
DUTCH WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT THEY COULD DO THAT MIGHT BE
HELPFUL IN PREVENTING THE SELECTION OF HAVANA AS THE SITE
FOR THE JUNE 1976 MEETING OF THE UNDP GOVERNING COUNCIL.
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HE INDICATED THAT THE DUTCH HAD NO PROBLEM OF THEIR OWN

WITH THE HAVANA VENUE BUT THEY DIDN'T LIKE THE IDEA THAT ONE OF THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTORS MIGHT NOT TAKE PART IN THE MEETING. THEY ALSO WONDERED WHETHER HOLDING THE MEETING IN HAVANA MIGHT HAVE LONG-LASTING NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON WASHINGTON'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS THE UNDP.

3. LEWIS REPLIED THAT THE USG HAS LONG MADE KNOWN ITS UNHAPPINESS WITH THE PROSPECT OF THE HAVANA VENUE, PARTLY BECAUSE WE GENERALLY PREFER SUCH MEETINGS TO BE HELD AT HEADQUARTERS LOCATIONS FOR REASONS OF CONVENIENCE, EFFICIENCY AND COST, AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF THE SERIOUS POLITICAL PROBLEM INVOLVED FOR US. THE USG HAS HOPED THAT THE GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING WOULD BE HELD IN GENEVA. LEWIS SAID HE WAS NOT IN A POSITION TO PREDICT AT THIS STAGE WHETHER THE US WOULD OR WOULD NOT ATTEND IF THE MEETING IS HELD IN HAVANA. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE JUNE TIMING COULD BE VERY DIFFICULT FOR THE US, PARTICULARLY IF IT COINCIDES WITH CONGRESSIONAL CONSIDERATION OF THE UNDP BUDGET. THERE WAS A REAL DANGER, PARTICULARLY IF CUBA WAS HEAVILY INVOLVED IN ANGOLA AT THAT TIME, THAT CONGRESS WOULD REACT TO A HAVANA MEETING BY CUTTING THE US CONTRIBUTION TO UNDP.

4. LEWIS SAID THAT IT IS IMPORTANT FOR COUNTRIES WHICH TAKE THE UNDP SERIOUSLY TO TRY TO PREVENT SUCH PROBLEMS FROM ARISING. THE US DELEGATION EXPECTS TO MAKE CLEAR TO THOSE ATTENDING THIS JANUARY'S MEETING OF THE GOVERNING COUNCIL THAT IT OPPOSES HAVANA AS A VENUE AND DOESN'T KNOW WHETHER THE US COULD ATTEND A JUNE MEETING IN HAVANA. LEWIS SAID HE THOUGHT THAT THERE MUST BE SOME WAY FOR COUNTRIES CONCERNED TO BRING ABOUT A CHANGE IN THE OUTLOOK. HE MADE CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THE USG WAS NOT ITSELF LEADING A CAMPAIGN, AND WOULD NOT LEAD A CAMPAIGN, TO REJECT THE CUBAN INVITATION.

5. IN THE SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSION LEWIS INDICATED THAT THE US WOULD SUPPORT ANY PROPOSAL IN THE JANUARY GOVERNING COUNCIL MEETING THAT THE JUNE MEETING BE HELD IN GENEVA. IT WOULD ALSO SUPPORT ANY PROPOSAL THAT CONSIDERATION OF THE CUBAN INVITATION BE POSTPONED, A SOLUTION WHICH MIGHT

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APPEAL TO MORE COUNTRIES THAN AN OUTRIGHT REJECTION.

6. HUIBREGTSE SAID THAT THE DUTCH GOVERNMENT WOULD REFLECT ON THE POINTS MADE BY LEWIS AND WOULD CONSIDER WHETHER IT CAN PLAY A USEFUL ROLE IN SOLVING THE PROBLEMS POSED BY THE HAVANA VENUE. HE INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT HE WAS NOT OPTIMISTIC REGARDING THE PROSPECTS OF AVOIDING HAVANA.

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